



PANHANDLE

BENEWAH, BONNER, BOUNDARY, KOOTENAI, & SHOSHONE COUNTIES

LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

The Panhandle's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate jumped from 8.1 percent in June to 8.7 percent in July. The U.S. economic slowdown caused further job losses in the Panhandle's manufacturing sector. In addition, low lumber prices forced reductions in logging and lumber mill jobs. The closure of the Sunshine mine and the upcoming mass layoff at the Lucky Friday mine curtailed retail, service, and government jobs in Shoshone County. Job cuts by Spokane manufacturers and call centers also contributed to Panhandle unemployment, since many Panhandle residents work in Spokane. See Panhandle Table 1 for details.

SPECIAL TOPICS

Crown Pacific Mills

Crown Pacific Partners recently announced that it will close its Coeur d'Alene mill in late October and that Louisiana-Pacific purchased its Bonners Ferry mill. Portland-based Crown purchased four Panhandle mills from DAW Forest Products in 1994. It closed the Oldtown mill in 1996 and the Colburn mill in 1999. Until lumber prices fell precipitately in the spring of 2000, 160 people worked at the Crown Pacific sawmill on Huetter Road in Coeur d'Alene. About 90 people still work at the sawmill. Coeur d'Alene Job Service will provide job search, relocation, and job training services to the sawmill workers dislocated by the closure.

Crown Pacific built a \$17 million state-of-the-art sawmill at the Bonners Ferry site two years ago. The sawmill, which produces dimension lumber, employs about 100 people. Louisiana-Pacific's two existing mills in the Panhandle—the Chilco mill near Athol and the Moyie Springs mill—make studs for framing. Crown Pacific has pledged to provide Louisiana-Pacific

Panhandle Table 1: Labor Force & Employment

	July 2001*	June 2001	July 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	92,230	91,170	88,150	1.2	4.6
Unemployed	8,070	7,390	7,070	9.2	14.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.7%	8.1%	8.0%		
Total Employment	84,160	83,780	81,080	0.5	3.8
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	93,570	92,330	89,550	1.3	4.5
Unemployed	6,370	6,150	5,470	3.6	16.5
% of Labor Force Unemployed	6.8%	6.7%	6.1%		
Total Employment	87,200	86,180	84,080	1.2	3.7
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	69,490	69,500	68,780	0.0	1.0
Goods-Producing Industries	15,070	14,800	15,470	1.8	-2.6
Mining	790	800	1,030	-1.3	-23.3
Construction	5,500	5,370	5,320	2.4	3.4
Manufacturing	8,780	8,630	9,120	1.7	-3.7
Lumber & Wood Products	4,240	4,040	4,520	5.0	-6.2
All Other Manufacturing	4,540	4,590	4,600	-1.1	-1.3
Service-Producing Industries	54,420	54,700	53,310	-0.5	2.1
Transportation	1,720	1,570	1,790	9.6	-3.9
Communication & Utilities	1,070	1,080	1,050	-0.9	1.9
Wholesale Trade	2,340	2,340	2,290	0.0	2.2
Retail Trade	15,880	15,540	15,720	2.2	1.0
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	2,550	2,560	2,440	-0.4	4.5
Service & Miscellaneous	18,340	18,000	17,810	1.9	3.0
Government Administration	8,340	8,410	8,040	-0.8	3.7
Government Education	4,180	5,200	4,170	-19.6	0.2

* Preliminary estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

with a 10-year supply of logs from its 250,000 acres of timberland in Idaho.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Benewah County

- Governor Kempthorne's Rural Idaho Initiative recently granted \$500,000 to the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and Seeds, Inc. for expansion of their Pacific Northwest Fiberboard (PNF) plant in Plummer. The grant will be used to build a 25,000-square-foot facility to store straw bales. PNF turns straw—primarily Kentucky bluegrass stubble—into boards, similar to oriented-strand boards. PNF can only use dry bales. Currently, PNF throws away many bales because they cannot be protected from rain and snow. The new storage facility will reduce PNF's production costs. In addition, the grant will be used for improvements of machinery and buildings. Construction will begin this fall. After construction is completed, the strawboard plant will employ 56 people. Currently, it employs half that number.

- Two-year-old Pacific Northwest Fiber was the first tenant in the Coeur d'Alene Tribe's industrial park on the former Rayonier mill site in Plummer. The newest tenant is the state-of-the-art Plummer Forest Products mill which makes small-dimension lumber. Plummer Forest Products, which opened in July, employs about 50 people.

Bonner County

- An ice house dating from the 1800s was transformed into a New York-style pizzeria this summer. The Old Ice House Pizza Deli is located next to the Hope City Hall.
- Pierce Christie recently opened Main Street Music and Games at 111 Main Street in Sandpoint. The store sells a wide variety of music recordings, video games, stereo systems, and musical instruments.

Kootenai County

- Factory 2-U, a discount chain, will open a store in October in part of the former Montgomery Ward slot at the Coeur d'Alene Town Center at 101 Best Avenue. The 15,000-square-foot store will sell discount clothing and household goods, and will employ about 20 people.
- At last, Coeur d'Alene residents know what will become of the former Rosauers grocery site at the intersection of Highway 95 & Appleway in Coeur d'Alene. Since Rosauers closed in August 2000, much speculation has focused on what would happen to the site located at North Idaho's busiest intersection. Carpet Center and another tenant will open retail stores in the former Rosauers building, while Walgreen Pharmacy and a Del Taco fast-food restaurant will construct new buildings on pads in the front parking lot. Carpet Center will occupy 45,000-square feet of the 60,000-square-foot Rosauers building. Petco pet supply store will most likely be the second tenant. Remodeling of the Rosauers building will begin early in 2002, as will construction of the 15,000-square-foot Walgreen and the 3,400-square-foot Del Taco Mexican Restaurant. After Carpet Center moves into its new building next spring, it will close its current, much smaller store, at the intersection of U.S. 95 & Dalton Avenue.
- Riverstone, the 73-acre commercial and residential development just off Northwest Boulevard in Coeur d'Alene, has lined up three tenants for its first commercial building. When it is completed at the end of the year, the three-story, 28,000-square-foot office building will house Rivermill Investments, BioGenetic Ventures, and Oxyfresh Worldwide. Rivermill Investments is the marketing arm for the Riverstone development.
- BioGenetic Ventures plans to move from Spokane to Riverstone as soon as the office building is ready for occupancy. Founded two years ago by Peter Allison, the biotech firm employs about 20 people. Oxyfresh Worldwide, a multi-level marketing company, also will relocate its corporate headquarters from Spokane to

Riverstone. The 17-year-old company sells vitamins, toothpaste, shampoo, and personal care items. Its corporate headquarters employs about 50 people. Oxyfresh also will be moving its distribution center from Minneapolis to Coeur d'Alene later this year. The 15,000-square-foot distribution center will employ 20 people.

- Idaho Independent Bank plans to move its Coeur d'Alene branch from 912 Northwest Boulevard to a larger structure it will build at Riverstone. It expects to break ground for the new building in early spring.
- Coeur d'Alene recently welcomed the following new businesses: LouLou's Sport Shop, selling equipment for water sports, bicycling, skiing, and snowboarding at 215 W. Kathleen Avenue; Sheres, selling contemporary and antique furniture and offering interior design services, at 317 Sherman Avenue; Becky's Pendleton, selling Pendleton wool blankets and clothing, at 421 Sherman Avenue; and Adventure City Paintball which occupies a five-acre lot on Lancaster Road in Hayden.
- Executive Search International recently moved its corporate headquarters from the Seattle area to 1713 Sherman Avenue in Coeur d'Alene. Six people work at the headquarters. ESI recruits executives for telecommuting and information-technology industries.
- Edgewood Log Structures will move its headquarters from Clarkston to the Athol area by next spring. The 18-year-old business builds 20 to 30 high-end log homes a year. Initially the business will employ 15 people. It is located along Highway 95 near Silverwood Theme Park.

Shoshone County

- Economic development grants from Governor Kempthorne's Rural Idaho Initiative include \$115,000 for a second phase for Shoshone County's business park under development at Smelterville. This will allow the park's first tenant, the Tele-Servicing Innovations (TSI) call center, to double its work force to 90. The TSI call center moved into the park September 1, leaving the temporary quarters in Coeur d'Alene where it had waited for the opening of the business park's first building. Approximately 40 Silver Valley residents have been taking a bus provided by TSI to work for the last nine months.
- Jon Cantamessa recently opened the Wallace Athletic Club at 516 Cedar Street in Wallace. In addition to cardiovascular equipment and free weights, the fitness center offers a trainer, hot tub, sauna, and tanning bed.

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